



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Vicksburg District

THE Water's Edge

Winter 2008



MOTOR VESSEL MISSISSIPPI IV MAKES FINAL VOYAGE

**Corps issues final report on
Yazoo backwater**

**Louisiana Recovery Field
Office ends historic mission**

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**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

News magazine of the
Vicksburg District
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

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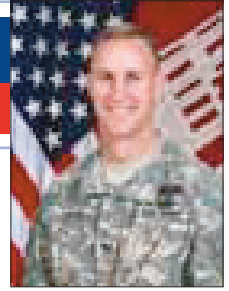


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District Engineer's Corner

with Col. Michael C. Wehr



To Teammates of the Vicksburg District...

Congratulations on being part of a fantastic organization! While I just joined the team in June '07, I can assure you that there is no other district with the unique disposition of the MVK Team.

During the District Commander's Conference in St. Louis (5-9 Nov) with LTG Van Antwerp, I heard all other commanders describe their districts. There is quite a variety, but not a single one includes the heritage of the Mississippi River, the co-location with their Division HQ, ERDC, and the 412th Engineer Command, and the track record of phenomenal responsiveness to natural disaster.

The PEOPLE of Vicksburg make this happen. The missions of Flood Damage Reduction, Navigation, Hydropower, Recreation, Environmental Stewardship, Regulatory, Water Supply, Emergency Operations, and GWOT deployments don't just happen because they are on paper. It's YOU, the current torchbearers of the Vicksburg District legacy! I could not be more proud to lead your team. I owe you a tremendous debt due to all the training, patient coaching, and open hospitality all of you have provided to me and my family.

Over my first few months, I have purposefully traveled throughout our vast district, attempting to meet everyone and seeing everything you do. I feel like a kid in a candy shop. It has been awesome to meet the lock tenders, park rangers, engineers, scientists, secretaries, planners, construction representatives, lawyers, resource managers, information technicians, logistics specialists, emergency managers, vessel masters and crews, power plant mechanics, safety professionals, project managers, and anyone I've failed to list. Also, I'll be the first to admit, I'm not done seeing the district yet.

Part of the job of every Commander is to learn the organization, the mission and the people, and navigate through future challenges. To do this, I've drafted the following personal mission statement that is dedicated to each of you. "I believe that commanding the Vicksburg District is all about serving its people in the mission of improving our Nation. This opportunity and obligation is centered upon enabling you, as a whole person (body, mind, heart, spirit) the choice of passionate contribution to the legacy of the Vicksburg District. Our path is Good to Great following the USACE Priorities and Tenets to achieve Results with Safety, Integrity, and Respect."

My mission also includes ensuring that the mission and goals of the Corps are being universally represented at the District level. Our new Chief of Engineers, LTG Robert L. Van Antwerp released his tenants and priorities for the Corps under his leadership.

PRIORITIES

- Support GWOT and expeditionary missions
- Enhance quality of support to Soldiers, Civilians, Families, and the Public
- Complete transformation of the Theater Engineer Commands
- Effectively prepare for and respond to disasters
- Enable Gulf Coast recovery
- Deliver Military, Civil Works, and R&D programs and projects

TENETS

- Communicate transparently
- Focus on your mission
- Team with industry

LTG Van Antwerp also leveraged the guidance within the Jim Collins book entitled "Good to Great". It's a study in taking good organizations to the next higher level, the level that makes them historic. If you haven't read it yet, I suggest you take time to take a look at it. Mr. Collins looked at a number of companies that made the leap from being very good companies to being truly great companies, how they did it, and how they sustained that environment.

It is important for each employee to know and understand our Corps Priorities and Tenets. Your supervisor may have already shown you a baseball which I gave to each staff member during our first staff meeting together. I asked that everyone sign that baseball and agree to commit to making those priorities and tenants a part of everything we do.

If you haven't signed the baseball yet, go to your supervisor and ask him/her about the baseball, and ask for an explanation on what the priorities and tenants mean to us as a District, and to you as an employee. The ball is just the start, how we play the game is the future.

Again, I want to thank everyone for the welcome you've provided since my arrival on the District Team. I look forward to working with you as we do our part in serving this great Nation.

DUTY IN AFGHANISTAN HOLDS UNIQUE MEMORIES

BY CURT BIBERDORF, ALASKA DISTRICT

Opening ceremonies, one including a goat slaughtered by a couple of village elders for their American guests, were among the highlights of a six-month deployment to Afghanistan that turned into two years for Dean Homleid.

Homleid, Eielson program manager for Alaska District, volunteered to serve in Afghanistan in October 2005 and traveled across the Taliban-liberated country as head of the Building Facilities Group for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID-Afghanistan).

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has provided engineering support to USAID since 2004 through a Participating Agency Support Agreement. Afghanistan Engineer District (AED) has nine engineers embedded in the USAID Office of Infrastructure, Engineering, and Energy, and provides additional engineering and contracting support from the AED. These engineers help USAID manage its road, power, and social sector construction programs.

Homleid said most of his work was managing USAID's construction program to build or refurbish health and education facilities. From the start of the program in May 2004 until July of this year, his group has overseen the construction or refurbishment of more than 670 schools and clinics in villages throughout the country. Average completion rate for the program was 25 sites per month.

"That's not bad considering the remote geography of Afghanistan, the fluid security situation, and relatively unskilled work force," Homleid said.

That program is now complete, and USAID has awarded \$80 million in new construction programs to build schools in Kabul, along with teacher education colleges, hospitals, and midwife training centers in 21 provincial capitals.

In support of USAID, the Corps has managed the refurbishment of several schools and clinics in Nangahar and Laghman provinces and, next spring, AED will again support USAID in implementing the construction of 20-classroom teacher education buildings at 16 university campuses across Afghanistan.

"The USAID and AED partnership

typifies the broad political, social, and economic approach the U.S. is employing to bring stability, security and reconstruction to Afghanistan," said Jane Mergler, program manager with USAID's Office of Infrastructure, Energy and Engineering. To reinforce that partnership, Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp, the Chief of Engineers, recently visited

with Henrietta Fore, acting administrator of the USAID, in Washington, D.C.

During his deployment, Homleid has seen access to health care rise from 8 to 82 percent, and infant mortality decline by 22 percent. Girls are attending school for the first time where it would have been impossible during the Taliban regime, and with the new Kabul Schools Program, more than 40,000 children will move from studying under tents and trees into safe school buildings.

Homleid said he originally volunteered for a six-month tour to Afghanistan for a change of pace and the chance to work overseas. But he extended for two years because he was having fun on the job, and didn't want to leave some major programs unfinished.

He traveled to dozens of villages in 28 out of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, inspecting schools and clinics and conducting opening ceremonies.

"Once, I went to a clinic for a routine final inspection and, when we arrived, there must have been 2,000 people waiting," Homleid said. "When we got off the helicopter, a couple of elders slaughtered a goat for us, and then we all gave speeches. I'll remember that one for a long time!"

Homleid said he enjoyed working with the Afghans, who are easy-going, hospitable people.

Story and photo courtesy of Engineer Update



David Homleid extended his 6-month tour in Afghanistan because he didn't want to leave unfinished projects.

"The Afghan engineers I've worked with have a lot of common sense and decent academic training, but they lack hands-on experience," Homleid said. "Capacity building is a big part of the mission here so that one day they can rebuild the country for themselves. We're not quite there yet."

While the Afghan engineers brought an understanding of the culture and how that affects engineering and getting the work done, Homleid passed along helpful practices from the Corps on developing quality assurance and project management plans.

"I think those will pay off in the long run, but hopefully they learned from me how to sort the big stuff from the little stuff and how to make decisions day-to-day by keeping the big picture in mind," Homleid said.

Homleid recommends a deployment as a chance to do something completely different, experience a new culture, work with people from around the world, and make a positive difference in people's lives.

"Deployment to Afghanistan will be a great experience if you come with the right frame of mind," he said. "It really comes down to each person's tolerance to be away from family and friends, and their appetite for a once-in-a-lifetime experience."

MOTOR VESSEL MISSISSIPPI IV MAKES FINAL VOYAGE

Photos by Alfred Dulaney



BY DAVID LONGMIRE—CONTRACT WRITER

It was smooth sailing down the middle of South Washington Street on Sept. 25, as the Motor Vessel Mississippi IV completed her final voyage to her permanent exhibit location. The 1,450-ton, 218-foot towboat was the flagship of the Mississippi River Commission from 1961 – 1993, and will be the main attraction at the soon to be constructed U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Lower Mississippi River Museum and Riverfront Interpretive Site. Ribbon cutting for the completed facility is tentatively scheduled for spring 2010.

"Moving the vessel was phase one of the Corps' three-phase plan to construct a facility that will promote an understanding of the river and the Corps' role in developing and managing the Lower Mississippi," said Tommy Hengst, the Vicksburg District Corps of Engineers Senior Project Manager.

"This was too big a project from the appropriations standpoint, that's why we split it up into three phases," Hengst said.

Phase two of the project is constructing the museum facility and phase three is moving the Fairgrounds Street Bridge from its current location south of the project area to Jackson Street, "where people can leave the museum complex, walk over the bridge spanning Levee Street to an overlook area and then down to the parking lot," Hengst said.

Phase one of the contract was completed at the end of November 2007. Neither the phase two nor the phase three portions of the contract have been awarded to date.

"We want this facility, which was

authorized by Congress in 1992, to be more than just a building. We want it to be utilized to its fullest by members of the community," Hengst said. The museum complex will contain several meeting rooms, a multitude of river-related displays and a theater. He said members of several local organizations had already talked with him about using the meeting rooms and that several retired Corps employees had spoken with him about volunteering their time to work at the museum.

"The MV Mississippi will be the largest exhibit in the museum and there will be exhibits onboard the vessel as well. The engine room, the wheelhouse, the state rooms, all those things will be open for the public to see. They will be able to see what that era of motor vessel was really like. This was the MRC's first diesel powered flagship. Motor Vessels I, II, and III were all steam powered," Hengst said.

The original idea for the museum complex was conceived by city officials and other Vicksburg residents in 1992 during the Mayor Joe Loviza administration. That's when the City of Vicksburg bought the MV Mississippi from the Memphis District for \$1. The original plans called for a floating river museum

inside a coffer dam at the City Front with a small adjacent museum building. This plan never materialized.

In 2000 then Mayor Laurence Leyens' administration began to push the project and made it an important part of Vicksburg's overall plan for the historic downtown area. In 2000 a Vicksburg delegation went to Washington, D.C. to present their modified plans and Congress changed the specifications for the project from a floating museum to the present project and appropriated \$2 million for design work. In 2006 the funding was raised to \$15 million,

"As the local sponsor, the City of Vicksburg bought the property on which the boat now sits and the property where the museum will be built and deeded the property to the Vicksburg District. The City, through the Mississippi Dept. of Archives and History also transferred the title of the MV Mississippi to the Vicksburg District," Hengst said.



MV MISSISSIPPI IV prepared to make move from water to land.

"This is probably the most interesting jobs that I have ever been a part of in my 34 years with the Corps," said Project Construction Representative, Howard Ziegler. "It was a site to see, watching the contractors bring that boat out of the river and down Washington Street to her final resting place. That boat is a lot bigger out of the water than it looks in the water!" Ziegler said.

The prime contractor responsible for moving the MV Mississippi was ProCon, Inc. of Brandon, MS. Their primary subcontractor for the heavy moving job was the Dutch company Mammoet, which has an office in Houston, Texas. Their credentials included the raising of the Russian nuclear submarine Kursk in 2001.

"Early on in this project we sat down with some of the heavy haulers from all over this area and discussed the situation and the one that impressed us the most was Mammoet," said ProCon, Inc. owner James L. Morris.

"I worked with the contractors on this project since day one back in April 2007 when the ProCon contract was first awarded," Ziegler said. "First thing we did was remove all the fuels, oils and storage materials off the boat before sending it down to Morgan City, La."

"One of the bigger obstacles at the start of the project was finding a dry dock that was large enough to handle that boat. We finally found Conrad Ship Yards at Morgan City," Morris said.

Another obstacle was finding a barge large enough to transport the boat back to Vicksburg once it was dry docked and the transporters were mounted to it's hull so it could navigate the city streets in route to the museum site.

So after the fuels, oils, old bedding, galley pots and pans, etc. were off-loaded, "we got two large tugboats to take her from Vicksburg and we arrived in Morgan City on a Friday," Morris said. "Mammoet had the barge already at the shipyard. The boat went into dry dock late that Friday afternoon and it was raised out of the water," Morris said.

Once the boat was out of the water Mam-

moet attached the transporters under the hull. The two transporters, called self-propelled modular transports, each consist of 136 wheels that run the length of the vessel. The transporters work in unison and are steered by a Mammoet employee who sits at the left rear of the transporter unit.

"Once the transporters were attached they brought the barge up and loaded the MV Mississippi on the barge. The motor vessel and the transporters weighed more than 16,000 tons. That Saturday afternoon we left Morgan City; and it took us six days with tugs to bring the boat back to Vicksburg," Morris said.

"Once the boat was back in Vicksburg we rolled it off onto the bank and started sandblasting it," Ziegler said. "Anderson-Tully Co. agreed to let us use part of their log yard along the Yazoo Diversion Canal to off load and work on the boat," he said.

"The most critical point in the entire project was taking it off of the barge and placing it on dry ground at the Anderson-Tully property," Morris said. "The river was falling fast at that time. We really needed high water, because we had such a big ramp we had to come up. So, we were scurrying trying to make sure that we had our ramps right and that we were coordinating with all the parties involved," Morris said.

The Yazoo Diversion Canal and Washington Street were shut down for about half a day when the boat was off-loaded from the barge and Washington St. was closed another half day when the boat was moved to the museum site.

The boat was worked on at the log yard for about three months during the summer until Entergy said it was okay to kill

some major power lines that were in the way of the move. "Since we had to cut the main transmission lines we had to wait until International Paper, Entergy's main user in our area scheduled a shut-down. The biggest concern for Entergy was that if we cut power in the grid that it would cause a domino effect like in 2003 in the Northeast bringing down the grid," Hengst said.

A concrete cradle for the MV Mississippi was being constructed at the museum site the same time the vessel relocation and rehabilitation was underway. "The contractor drilled 206 pilings at the final resting place and poured the concrete walls for the vessel to sit on. The bow and stern sections were not poured at this time to leave room to maneuver the boat into place," Ziegler said.

On Sept. 25 at 8 a.m. Vicksburg Police blocked Washington Street and Mammoet cranked up the transporters engines and the boat began to inch her way to the museum site. The move went almost without a hitch. In one area, a utility pole was leaning inwards toward Washington Street and Entergy had to auger beside the pole and lean it away from the street to allow enough room for the boat to pass.

By 2 p.m. the move was completed. The boat was placed on temporary supports to allow the contractor to finish the bow and stern concrete walls of the foundation support structure.

Mammoet returned to the Vicksburg November 14 and raised the vessel so the temporary supports could be removed and the MV Mississippi was lowered onto her permanent concrete pedestal where she will be viewed by generations to come.



Tugs prepare to move the MV MISSISSIPPI to be fitted with rails so that it can be moved to land.

CORPS ISSUES FINAL REPORT ON YAZOO BACKWATER

The Vicksburg District has released its final report on the Yazoo Backwater Area Reformulation Study. The Final Report includes the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and 17 supporting appendices. The notice of availability was published in the Federal Register on November 16, 2007.

As part of the release a public meeting was held in Mayersville, Mississippi at the Court House on November 29. More than 150 people participated in the meeting, with more than 44 speakers including both supporters and opponents of the project submitting statements for the record. The report comment period will be open to the public until January 22.

The Recommended Project Plan includes the construction of a pump station near Steele Bayou structure, north of Vicksburg, MS and reforestation of up to 55,600 acres of existing agricultural land in the Yazoo Backwater Area.

The pumping station is designed to be used only when water behind the Steele Bayou structure reaches 87 feet NGVD and only if the structure is closed due to high water on the Mississippi and Yazoo Rivers. When water on the southern side of Steele Bayou is lower, the gates can be opened and natural gravity flow can be used to move water as needed. However, when water in the Mississippi River backs up into the Yazoo and is higher than the water behind the structure, the gates must



The Steele Bayou Structure north of Vicksburg is a critical component of the project.

be closed to protect the area from backwater flooding.

When that happens however, water from Deer Creek and Steele Bayou has no where to go and begins to accumulate behind the structure. If it starts to rain, the problem gets worse.

The recommended plan is a balanced approach with both structural and non-structural components. Some of the benefits include:

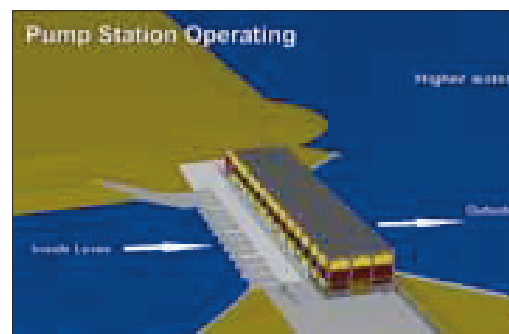
- **Improved water quality**
- **An 11 percent increase in terrestrial resource values.**
- **An 8 percent increase in aquatic rearing values.**
- **A 30 percent increase in aquatic spawning values.**
- **A 19 percent increase in wetland function.**
- **A 53 percent increase in waterfowl foraging value.**

The Final Report comes after extensive cooperative efforts with various state and federal agencies, in-depth environmental studies and consideration of all points of view. The Recommended Plan is a balanced approach, which will both reduce flooding and improve the environment.

The Yazoo Backwater project, originally authorized in 1941, is a system-wide approach that only lacks construction of the pump station and reforestation to be completed. For more information, please visit the web site <http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/>



The project area for the Yazoo Backwater.



The pump station would operate only during specific backwater flooding conditions.



Louisiana Recovery Field Office ends historic mission

SPECIAL FROM ENGINEER UPDATE

After an array of historic accomplishments, such as removing 28 million cubic yards of hurricane debris, the Louisiana Recovery Field Office (LA-RFO) has retired from service.

The official commemoration on September 25 was led by Col. Thomas Smith, commander of Memphis District and LA-RFO, and Mike Smith, LA-RFO Director. The termination of work was officially noted, the nearly 3,500 volunteers acknowledged and thanked, and in military tradition, the organization's colors ceased, indicating a unit's deactivation.

"Once there had been not a single square foot of the nine miles of temporary roofing," said Col. Smith. Once there had been not one drop of the 40 million liters of water distributed to storm victims. Once there was only chaos."

Smith noted that an important role of LA-RFO, raised during the worst disaster in American history, was to create a foothold and provide an opening for the rest of the recovery effort. "Somebody had to start," he said.

The LA-RFO opened its doors in Baton Rouge days after the hurricane, preparing to open roads in 40 parishes, saving lives, sustaining lives, and setting the stage for communities to manage their own recovery operations with power, temporary critical public facilities and schools, ice, water, blue roof repairs, and debris and demolition services.

From the outset, LA-RFO was temporary, created for only one purpose-to productively help the citizens of Louisiana recover from the devastation and destruction of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Normal Corps hurricane responses last about four months. The Katrina-Rita response lasted 25 months.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' national response system poured about 3,500 of its worldwide workforce into South Louisiana to manage a \$5 billion recovery program. In a matter of days, LA-RFO set up the equivalent of a "provisional district office" in Baton Rouge, and later advanced the entire operation

forward into New Orleans.

"Thank you not only for your service, but also for the lessons you have shared with these communities. They are now better prepared to handle future responses because of those things you taught them following Katrina and Rita," said FEMA Public Assistance Deputy Eddie Williams.

One may marvel at the work accomplished by this team, such as installing more than 81,000 temporary roofs-enough to cover nine square miles.

They hauled in 2,178 truckloads of water at 18,000 liters each, plus 1,533 truckloads of ice - equal to 62,000 convenience store ice machines.

They built 216 school classrooms, and 94 other critical public facilities such as fire and police stations.

The LA-RFO team built an 18,720-square-foot Victim Identification Center and mortuary that now remains ready for further national emergencies.

Concern for the survivors led to assessing 1,217 sites, and monitoring 65,000 FEMA trailers that housed homeless Louisianans. Literally in the citizens' back yards, they removed more than 58,000 trees killed by salt water, and demolished more than 7,000 storm-destroyed homes.

This volunteer workforce was made up of full-time Corps employees, rehired annuitants, active duty and Reserve soldiers, and contractors. Their numbers peaked at 1,700.

"We have completed all the work that FEMA has asked of us. That was our mission. We've brought these communities to a level of independence that allows them to finish their long-term recovery using local resources and funding from FEMA under the Project Work Sheet Program," Smith said.

Col. Smith stated that the mission reinforced his faith in the nation to respond to similar challenges. "I'm optimistic about any challenge in this country any time in the future," he said. "We have an enormous capacity of human spirit, and the Corps and FEMA will be there regardless of the challenge."

Photos courtesy of LA-RFO



A quality assurance inspector with the Louisiana Recovery Field Office watches the installation of a temporary blue roof on a home damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

Photos courtesy of LA-RFO



A steady stream of water keeps down the dust as a crane demolishes a Louisiana house damaged by the hurricane.

Jackson County—Two years beyond Katrina

The second year of post-Katrina recovery marked a time of significant improvement for Jackson County, but also brought into focus several challenging areas. From recreation to repairing office space, the County has steadily pushed forward reestablishing full services for our citizens.

As the entire Coast moves beyond Katrina's two year benchmark, Jackson County still faces major hurdles including permanent housing for the 3,000 families still in FEMA trailers, new zoning requirements, abandoned property, and reimbursement of Katrina repairs. Below is a summary of the County's post-Katrina accomplishments in the last year.

County-wide Fair returned-October 2006

The skyline over the Jackson County Fairgrounds came to life with spinning streams of light and the smell of fresh gumbo as the Fair returned on Oct. 15-22. This marked the 85th anniversary of the fair and the resumption of a fall tradition in Jackson County.

"This year was especially meaningful since we were forced to postpone the previous fair due to Hurricane Katrina. We were thrilled to be holding the regions' largest free admission fair again," said Alan Smith, JC Fair Board.

Rebuilt Lake Mars Pier- November 2006

County began major repair work on the Lake Mars Pier in the Gulf Park Estates Community. Prior to Katrina, the pier was one of the most popular in the County for fishing and crabbing.

Katrina knocked out the pier's railing, deck boards, 35 pilings, and heavily damaged the gazebo. Along with repairs, the County also added new lighting, a larger beach and additional parking. Construction crews finished repair work in Feb. 2007.

Re-opened County Courts Complex- December 2006

Following more than \$2 million in Hurricane Katrina repairs to the courthouse complex, the Jackson County Board of Supervisors officially reopened the Courts Building on Dec. 19 with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

The Courts Building is the backbone of the County's court system housing nine courtrooms, seven judges' offices, three court administrators' offices, Chancery

Clerk's offices and Drug Court offices. Hurricane Katrina pushed more than four feet of storm surge into the building's first floor and caused significant wind damage to the roof.

"This was a tremendous step forward in the County's recovery process. Reopening this building was about more than office space. It was about restoring the County's court system, restoring service to our citizens and restoring a vital element to Downtown Pascagoula," 2006 Board President Robert R. Norvel, Sr. said.

Reopening this building was about more than office space. It was about restoring the County's court system, restoring service to our citizens

County opened new Office Building- January 2007

Six displaced County departments moved into their new permanent offices in early Jan. 2007. The Board purchased the former "Unemployment Office" on Amonett Street in Pascagoula for \$495,000 as its newest office complex in late 2006. A majority of that cost will be reimbursed through FEMA's Public Assistance program.

The 11,564 square foot building was completely remodeled by the County's Maintenance Department. All six departments- Election Commission, County Archives, Coroner's Office, Mass Tort, Extension Service Office and Veteran's Affairs Office- were forced to move after Hurricane Katrina flooded each of their offices.

County awarded \$8M grant for new service complex- March 2007

The County was notified it would receive an \$8 million federal block grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to build a new office

complex in downtown Pascagoula in March 2007.

The new complex will house more than 100 County employees still working out of temporary offices at the County's Fairgrounds. The County has completed an early design plan for the new service complex and will begin detailed architectural plans this fall. The initial design calls for a four story office complex located directly south of the current Courthouse Complex.

Storm debris cleared from Ocean Springs Harbor- April 2007

More than 200 cubic yards of hurricane debris was removed from the County's Ocean Springs Harbor by the U.S. Coast Guard in April. The removal allowed the harbor to reopen several block boat slips and allowed more of the water channel to be used.

Despite heavy damage, the Harbor reopened just weeks after Katrina using a temporary office and boaters avoiding damaged areas. (For more information about harbor repairs see Sept. 2007 section below.)

Repair work began on Sheriff's Department- June 2007

Contractors began \$2,600,000 worth of repair work on the Sheriff Department's main offices in Downtown Pascagoula on June 21, 2007. The offices were destroyed by more than four feet of water from Katrina's storm surge.

The repair work is expected to take six months to complete. The work also includes a major improvement project. The department's emergency response communication equipment will be elevated and better protected from future storms. Additional temporary power is also being added for this equipment in the event of another large scale power outage.

County purchased 14 Katrina flooded homes- July 2007

Using FEMA's Hazardous Mitigation Funds, the Board of Supervisors purchased an additional 14 houses severely flooded during Hurricane Katrina in July 2007. Each of these houses has a long history of flooding over the last 40 years and will be removed from the property. Demolition work is scheduled to start on Aug. 29, 2007.

Continued on page 15

Motor Vessel Mississippi IV

Photos by Alfred Dulaney



Above: The motor vessel is being removed from water onto ramp.

Below: Work crew prepares to move motor vessel onto Washington Street.



Above: The motor vessel is guided out of water onto ramp.

Below: The motor vessel makes the last turn necessary to get out onto Washington Street.



Makes Final Voyage Home

Photos by Alfred Dulaney



Banner depicting the partnership among the Corps, the City of Vicksburg, and contractors.



Doug Kamien, Tommy Hengst, Bob Fitzgerald, Tom Matthews, Tim Shows, Howard Zeigler, and Kyron Mabry stand in front of the motor vessel as it eases down Washington Street.



Platform prepared for arrival of MV MISSISSIPPI



MV MISSISSIPPI sits at permanent location.

COURTESY OF RANGER UPDATE,
OPERATIONS DIVISION

Sardis Lake

Sardis Lake celebrated its 20th Annual Clean-Up Day on September 29 in conjunction with National Public Lands Day. National Public Lands Day began in 1994 with three federal agencies and 700 volunteers. During this event 125 volunteers participated by picking up trash along the shoreline of Sardis Lake.

After the clean-up, lunch was provided for the volunteers, and T-shirts were donated by Renasant Bank of Batesville and Sardis. The group of volunteers included several Boy Scout Troops, a JROTC unit, clients of North Mississippi Regional Center, and bank employees.



Photos courtesy of Rick Dwyer



Grenada Lake

Thanks to 118 volunteers who gathered for Grenada Lake's National Public Lands Day activities, one can now enjoy Grenada Lake's Physical Fitness and Hazerway Trails. This event has quickly grown to be the nation's largest hands-on effort to improve and enhance our public lands.

Last year more than 100,000 people volunteered in more than 1,100 locations across the nation in support of National Public Lands Day.

After a breakfast, and before the activities began, volunteers were briefed on the proposed activities and safety. The enthusiastic volunteers ranged in age from 6 to 66. They cleaned and repaired the Physical Fitness and Hazerway Trails, Dam Area Central playground, and repaired as well as installed bluebird and martin houses around the lake.

ARKANSAS

DeGray Lake hosts deer hunt for persons with disabilities

BY BRAIN WESTFALL
DEGRAY LAKE

The annual Deer Hunt for Persons with Disabilities returned to DeGray Lake project lands on 29-31 October 2007. After a three-year layoff, the 2007 deer hunt was an overwhelming success with Billy Fryar of Bigelow, Arkansas, harvesting a nine-point buck!

The Corps of Engineers, the Arkansas Disabled Sportsmen Association and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission partnered to provide a hunting experience for sportsmen with disabilities.

With the recent establishment of the DeGray Lake Wildlife Management Area, the hunt was held outside of the regular muzzle loading season guidelines. This change improved hunter safety concerns by reducing the chances of interaction with other hunters and enhanced the opportunity for hunting success.

Deer Hunt coordinator park ranger Jeffrey Lockwood stated, "A lot of hard work was put into preparing for the hunt, but when I saw the smiles on their faces I knew it was all worth it." The hunt was a great experience

which afforded me an opportunity to see how capable the participants really are. Life dealt them a blow but they have overcome and continue doing activities that they really enjoy."

Three disabled Arkansas sportsmen were selected through a random drawing from a pool of eighteen applicants. The sportsmen included Billy Fryar of Bigelow, Trey Lovell of Perryville, and Charley Beshears, Malvern, Arkansas.

Billy Fryar, a veteran of past DeGray Lake hunts, began his hunt with great anticipation. With the assistance of Corps personnel and volunteers, Mr. Fryar, confined to a wheel chair, set up a ground blind adjacent to a food plot near the DeGray Lake Field Office. After a two-hour wait around 0900 hours, a spike buck entered the food plot.

Mr. Fryar immediately sent a text message to Ranger Lockwood seeking advice on whether to attempt a shot or wait for a better buck. Mr. Fryar made the call to wait on a big buck and at 10:10 a large, mature buck entered the food plot about 80 yards away. Utilizing 50 cal. muzzleloader, Mr. Fryar executed a perfect double lung shot and harvested a nine-point buck weighing approximately 170 lbs.

Mr. Fryar stated, "The buck entered

the food plot where the spike left out. I realized it was a good buck, but I almost didn't get a shot off because the buck appeared to be cold trailing a doe. The shot was good and the buck ran down the ridge."

Corps employees trailed and located the buck approximately 100 yards away and the nine-point buck became the

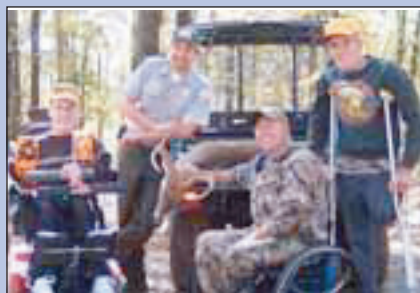
first deer harvested in a series of disabled deer hunts held at DeGray Lake.

When asked about lessons learned during the deer hunt, ranger Lockwood replied, "Whether or not a deer is harvested does not indicate the success of the hunt. The success of the hunt is measured by the friends you make and the memories each hunter takes home with them. But, a nine-point buck is sure a plus!"

One of the hunters exclaimed, "I enjoyed the fellowship, I'm looking forward to next year's event, the deer blinds were nice and I had a really good time. Thank You!"

As stewards of public lands, the Corps is dedicated to providing a safe, quality recreational experience for all visitors. The Deer Hunt for Persons with Disabilities is an outstanding example of natural resource management partnering to provide an experience of a lifetime for Arkansas hunters.

Supervisory park ranger Stacy Sigman stated, "It should have been called the 'Able Hunt' instead of the Disabled Hunt because of the participants' spirit and fortitude."



Participating with the deer hunt are left to right, Trey Lovell, park ranger Jeffrey Lockwood, Billy Fryar, and Charley Brashears.

House demolition in New Orleans—from start to finish

COURTESY OF NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT

It was 7:35 a.m. on a muggy Saturday morning in August.

From protracted experience, Corps safety specialist Pete Summerton looked down at his watch and observed, “In about 45 minutes, this house will be down.”

She’d fallen down, brought as it were, to her knees, by a surging wall of water.

Now, lightly she leaned, crunch nudged and battered, against her still, two-story-tall neighbor on her right – the same height as she too, had once stood.

Now, like a grounded ship, fatally injured and precariously perched upon a reef, she awkwardly squat over the debris of her former first floor.

Once a 2,600-square-foot, stucco-faced, clapboard home, she was one of the thousands of homes destroyed and laying, for all intents, dead—a victim of Hurricane Katrina and the ensuing, devastating flood in New Orleans.

Not all that long ago, children’s laughter had echoed from within, tears of parental concern had been shed for teenager’s transgressions, and holiday meals had been carefully prepared and consumed with familial gusto. Sadly, such would be no more.

Today was the day of her internment.

One witness to her demise was Ralph Smith, a Corps contracted quality assurance monitor. With this on-going recovery process since January 2006, he has been a part of the team conducting as many as three storm destroyed house demolitions a day. He estimated that he had been a part of taking nearly 300 structures down through the Corps’ Louisiana Recovery Field Office efforts.

The Corps teams took nearly 6,700 houses down as part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s response to south Louisiana.

In work such as this, one might surmise that, by now, he’d be calloused and hardened to the demolition “death” and removal of these homes. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Wearing hard hat, steel toed boots, a bright orange safety vest and safety glasses, he fully looked the part for his

job. Yet, the sensitivity of his comments almost seemed out of place amid the clamor of the demolishment work site.

“Each of these structures was someone’s home,” he points out. “This morning, during the walk through, we saw a flood-soaked teddy bear, water-sodden coloring books, furniture, blankets, pots and silverware. Why, there was still cooking oil in a pan sitting on the stove! It was if the home was frozen in the moment that the disaster struck.”

Following a full team safety briefing

home was exposed, remarkably unscathed and unscratched. Richard Baker, a retired annuitant (RAO) from the Vicksburg District, explained that this demolition was a regulated asbestos containing material (RACM) demolition.

Hence those close to the actual work all wore – in addition to their normal safety attire – full body protection suits, booties and respirator. This was not the preferred attire of choice for a hot and sultry, Southern Louisiana morning where heat indexes might later hit 110.

Behind a safety taped barrier, other crew members quietly watched the carefully choreographed dissection of the structure. They talked quietly with an almost funereal air of solemnity, sensitive to the scope, importance and impact of their actions on those who had once lived within that which they were removing.

Dennis Stegemeir, another RAO from Phoenix, Ariz., serving as a Corps quality assurance supervisor, moved among them, observing the labors, double checking actions, ensuring all was proceeding as it should.

The animated and perpetually cheerful Summerton, a Corps employee with the Walla Walla District, was likewise on hand to ensure every precaution was properly taken. “But, for all intents and purposes,” he stated, “my presence, sometimes, seems almost unnecessary as these contractors know their job and do it exceedingly well.”

Then, as if on cue and as lightly as if they were but paltry match boxes, the huge machine-beast lifted two refrigerators and a stove from the crushed debris and sat them off to the side of the neighborhood street.

“Those are considered ‘white goods’, and are handled in a manner prescribed by specific Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) regulations,” Baker explained. “Look at how efficiently the crew recognized that separation of these items was the correct procedure and acted accordingly. They truly know their business and are concerned the job they do is absolutely correct.”



House in center was once a 2600-square-foot stucco-faced home which, like so many others, was brought down by Katrina.

– clearly taken seriously by all, even after days of similar demolitions – as if knowing what was to come, the sad looking home and very ground on which it sat began to tremble. A 45,000-pound track hoe rumbled to a place before her sagging front porch face – a visceral harbinger of her final death throes.

Nearby, Bernard Wright, the team demolition manager from South New Jersey, attentively watched the every move of each of his people as work commenced.

Throughout the ensuing activity, the entire operation was methodically wetted by a continuous spray of water keeping hazardous asbestos particulates out of the air for the protection of workers and neighbors alike. Numerous residents sat on lawn chairs, on front stoops or porches quietly watching the operation.

For all the 22-ton track hoe’s girth and might, it lifted the stressed and splintered structure’s north side from its propped position against her still erect neighbor with almost gentle tenderness.

Soon, the entire side of the adjoining

Continued on page 16

ABC-C's of Retirement

Who are we? What do we do?

The ABC-C is a centralized benefits center for employees serviced by the Department of Army. We consist of approximately 45 benefit counselors; the same counselors you speak with when you call the ABC-C. They are also the people who process your retirement estimates and applications, disability retirements and work with survivors when a Federal employee dies. The ABC-C has a research staff of approximately six people who process deposits and redeposits as well as thoroughly research any benefit problems you might have. Our ten administrative personnel process Post-56 military deposits, code personnel actions, order your Official Personnel Folder (OPF) and handle the baskets and baskets of mail that come into the ABC-C daily. Last but not least, the ABC-C has a support staff that consists of automation, team leads, branch chiefs and the director who keeps everything running smoothly.

Where are we located?

The ABC-C is located on historical Ft. Riley, Kansas. Feel free to stop in and see us in action, the doors are always open.

Thrift Savings Plan Security and New Web Password

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) has taken a major step to help keep your personal account transactions and information more secure on their web site. As a result, longer and more complex web passwords are required when your log into the Account Access section on the TSP website.

If you are a participant with a TSP Personal Identification Number (PIN), the first time you log into the Account Access section, you will be prompted to either create your own web password using a unique combination of letters and numbers of your choice, or request a computer-generated password.

If you are just joining the TSP, you will be sent your initial password in the mail shortly after TSP receives your first contribution. After you use that web password once to log into the Account Access section, you will be able to change it to a password of your choice. Once you have a web password, you will no longer be able to log into the Account Access section online using your PIN.

However, don't lose track of your current **TSP PIN!** It will be needed to access your account by telephone via the Thrift-Line at 1-877-968-3778. The web password will not be accepted on the Thrift-Line.

Another important factor in keeping your TSP account secure is YOU, the account holder! It is up to you to keep your ThriftLine PIN and web password confidential. Never give your PIN out to anyone and never leave it where it can be viewed or accessed. You should ensure that your new password is entered only on a secure computer terminal.

More information about web passwords is available through the TSP Features at <http://www.tsp.gov>.

Membership Dues for Certain Health Plans

Are you thinking of changing your plan or coverage this year? Here's a reminder. Certain Fee-for-Service (FFS) plans under the FEHBP are sponsored by a union or employee organization. These plans generally require an annual association or membership fee in addition to the biweekly premiums. While premiums are collected via payroll deduction, the plan will bill you directly for the required fee. You are required to promptly respond to the invoice upon receipt from the plan. Failure to remit the annual fee may result in termination from the health plan. This too, is the case when the health plan is unable to locate you because of incorrect mailing address records.

Membership/fee requirements are stated on the cover of the plan's brochure. If you are enrolled in this type of health plan, it is your responsibility to ensure that your plan has your current address and your payment status for fees is current. If you are unsure whether or not your payment status is current, you may contact your health plan.

Currently, the more popular plans that are subject to fees are: Mail Handlers Benefit Plan, National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), American Postal Workers Union (APWU), and Government Employees Hospital Association (GEHA). Note: GEHA has announced that there will be no dues required for next year.

If you are enrolled in a plan sponsored by a union or employee organization and you stop being a member of that organization, your plan can ask your employ-

ing office to terminate your enrollment (subject to a 31-day extension of coverage). Termination of your coverage could adversely affect your ability to continue your health insurance into retirement. Be careful. If you need any further information, don't hesitate to contact one of our benefits counselors here in the ABC-C. Also, for more information on FEHB and FFS plans, you can visit the Office of Personnel Managements' (OPM) web site at <https://www.opm.gov>.

Did you know..?

Your Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) deductions are excluded from pay that's subject to garnishment? FEDVIP is a type of health insurance and is treated as pre-tax premiums deducted from pay prior to garnishment. Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) deductions however are subject to garnishment. FSA is considered a "savings account" that may cover health expenses, and monies allotted to fund your FSA will be included when calculating pay subject to garnishment.

The DFAS Corner

We're sure you've noticed! myPay officials announced another new security feature to protect your data on their pay account system. As part of their ongoing commitment to strengthen password and account security, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service has implemented the "virtual keyboard" to assist in protecting us against malicious software such as spyware, Trojans and key logging.

The virtual keyboard was available beginning mid-May. Each time you type in your login ID you will "press" the keys on the screen by clicking on them with your mouse to enter your Personal Identification Number (PIN) instead of typing the actual keys. The virtual keyboard is to be used only for your PIN.

To enhance security, the keyboard layout changes or keys are displayed randomly every time the page is refreshed.

DFAS uses a variety of security features to protect your data on the myPay system, yet they ask you do everything you can to protect that information from being compromised or captured on home computers. Under Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the myPay homepage (<https://mypay.dfas.mil>) you can find more information on steps to secure your home computer.

HUNTSVILLE CENTER CELEBRATES 40TH ANNIVERSARY

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, celebrated its 40th anniversary October 15. Huntsville Center, as it is commonly referred to, was established by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as Huntsville Division in 1967 with a single mission—to design and construct facilities for the deployment of the Army's Ballistic Missile Defense System.

Forty years later, the Center is still unique within the Corps. While most Corps offices focus on locks, dams and other regional projects and receive funding from Congress, Huntsville Center has no geographic boundaries and performs its work worldwide on a reimbursable basis.

Huntsville Center does not replicate the work of other Corps offices. Instead, its programs either support other offices or offer unique services not offered by others.

"We started with just one program and one mission, defense of the homeland, and 40 years later we are still focused on this mission using our specialized engineering and contracting capabilities. We now have numerous programs that support homeland security both here and abroad," said John Matthews, who has been employed at the Huntsville Center since 1977, and is Deputy for Programs and Technical Management.

Huntsville Center's programs have evolved from its history and experience. For example, in the 1970s, Huntsville Center was responsible for upgrading aging

munitions storage facilities nationwide and installation restoration projects which eventually led to Huntsville Center's role in the cleanup of Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) for the Army.

We started with just
one program and one
mission, defense of
the homeland...
40 years later,
we are still focused
on this mission.

Huntsville's experience with the FUDS program led to its designation as a Center of Expertise (CX) for Military Munitions, where it continues to work with districts and provide guidance.

"Our ordnance removal program is a good example of how we can develop and transfer knowledge and technical expertise," Matthews said. The Center will incorporate the Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive Waste Center of Expertise, located in Omaha, Neb., with its Military Munitions CX to become the Environmental and Munitions Center of Expertise in November.

Huntsville Center's Ordnance and Explosive program includes ordnance and explo-

sives safety, a chemical warfare material design center, a military munitions design center, and its Coalition Munitions Clearance work in Iraq — all of which help protect the public and environment.

Homeland security has been enhanced through monitoring and security provided to installations through programs like Utility Monitoring and Control Systems, Fire Protection Life Safety, Electronic Security Systems and Access Control Points.

"What began as procurement of medical furniture and equipment has become a multi-million dollar program and includes the Medical Center of Expertise," Matthews said. "The Medical Center of Expertise recently helped Baltimore District with a project at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., by developing the design-build request for proposal for the project and supporting the execution effort with technical support during solicitation. Also, our Integrated Modular Medical Support Systems program purchased furniture for the facility."

"We were established to assist customers with challenges and specialized projects, and we have been successful for 40 years because we have consistently provided quality products and service while maintaining a diverse workload around the globe," Matthews said.

Katrina—Continued from page 9

The "buyout" program is a volunteer assistance option offered to home owners wishing to move out of repetitive flood zones. Homeowners are offered the pre-storm value of their home. Once the home is removed, the property is restored to its natural condition. The Planning Department has already received more than 100 applications from homeowners to take part in the buyout program.

County completed plans for new Health Department- August 21, 2007

The County was notified that it would receive a \$3,977,000 federal block grant from Department of Housing and Urban Development to build a new Health Department Office in Pascagoula. Hurricane Katrina severely damaged the original office on Hospital Street and made the

building unusable.

Plans call for the new Health Dept. office to be built across the street from the County's Fairgrounds and lay adjacent to Singing River Hospital in Pascagoula. The County has hired an architectural firm to design the new office.

Ocean Springs Harbor began major Katrina repair- September/October 2007

Along with dumping debris and silts, Katrina's storm surge also heavily damaged several spots inside the Ocean Springs Harbor including a large section of the harbor's back pier, more than 25 finger boat piers, almost 100 pilings and a section of the bulk head.

The County has received construction bids for the repair work. FEMA relief funds will reimburse the County for the repairs. Despite the damage, the Harbor reopened just weeks after Katrina using

a temporary office and boaters avoiding damaged areas.

County dredged 100,000 CY of Katrina silt- Fall 2007

Hurricane Katrina's storm surge dumped an estimated 100,000 cubic yards of silt in six of the County's most traveled and used bayous- Graveline, Chicot, Fort Bayou, St. Martin, Morton, Ocean Springs Harbor.

To restore these bayous and their navigable waterways, the County began a major dredging project. Three of the bayous have already been approved for dredging. The last three are nearing the end of the approval process from DMR and the Army Corps of Engineers. Once final approval is received, the County will begin the bidding process. The County will be reimbursed for the dredging work with FEMA public assistance funds.

District completes stabilization work under Continuing Authority Program

The Corps recently completed, in partnership with the city of Jackson, Mississippi, under the Continuing Authorities Program, stream bank stabilization on a Eubanks Creek tributary in the Meadowbrook area.

The completed project consisted of installing a vertical H-pile timber lag wall and other associated improvements. Although the project was small in cost and size (only 250 feet in length), due to reduced funding of the Continuing Authorities Program, construction implementation proved difficult.

A contract could not be awarded because the bids received were beyond the allowable limit of the government estimate. A decision was made to proceed with construction using the District's hired labor force. The hired labor directive was approved in Aug 2006. The hired labor crew did an outstanding job of completing the project in Aug 2007.

They encountered difficulties of extreme rainfall and unknown utility lines,



The completed bank stabilization project adjacent to Crane Blvd., Jackson.

as well as working along a narrow urban corridor in a neighborhood sensitive to the project's aesthetics as well as its utility.

The final product has been well received by the city and local residents.

William Winter, former Governor of the Mississippi, who represented the affected residents, provided a letter of thanks for a job well done by all involved.

House—Continued from page 13

Looking back at the fast dissolving house, a disconcertingly, vacuous maw yawned where once the dwelling interior had been. The crunch, munching, steel-clawed bucket took out massive fist bites, fast exacting a telling toll.

Those observing this operation for the first time quickly became aware that, contrary to preconceived notions, this was not a smashing, crashing, "let's tear'er down" process. It was indeed conducted with care and consideration.

A case in point was West Virginian Mike McAllister, ensconced inside the cab of the track hoe. The skillful operator of the primary instrument of the house's demise performed the structural dissection with almost elegant precision and reverent sensitivity to the fact that people, just like himself, had once resided there, and that others still lived within inches of his powerful claw.

As more and more structural debris was removed, beneath her crumbled carcass a car and a motorcycle were found – fully covered up by the double-fisted damage of hurricane and flood.

Where once had been second story bedrooms in which children's bare feet had pattered, now was only open space. Where, only months ago, meals had lovingly been prepared and football games lazily watched, lay a seven-foot high pile of debris. Atop it, the track hoe stretched and reached its huge hydraulic arm – like a crane perfecting its nest – pulling, piling and carefully

placing the shattered material into a mound for pick up.

Such was this latter job for Rudy Kehren, a contracted professional from Atlanta, Ga. Like a mechanical stegosaurus, as his rubber tracked "skid steer" effortlessly grasped a refrigerator with its forked grapple – from which fell, long forgotten, formerly frozen items, once planned for family meals before anyone ever heard of a storm named Katrina.

Watching the smooth and seamless actions of the team for which he is responsible, contractor Sean Caniglia of Shreveport, La., commented that, "The NFL has nothing on this team."

Crew Supervisor Linda Seal stood nearby, her blue eyes darted back and forth watching to make sure all was done correctly.

"We've a great relationship with the Corps," she says, talking without taking her eyes from the demolition. "Every single person with whom I have dealt – active Army, Reservists, those seasoned rehired annuitants, active Corps employees or other contractors – has a deep, personal sense of commitment. And, all things considered, this entire process has been quite an undertaking."

Exactly 45 minutes after commencement of the work, the 18-wheeler backed up to the debris pile. Its trailer bed lay covered by a double layer shroud of thick plastic in which the RACM material would be carefully wrapped before burial. The vehicle awaited transport of the lifeless remains of this home to its place of final internment – the Riverbirch landfill.

Community Relations

BY PAO STAFF

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN AFFORDS OPPORTUNITY TO HELP OTHERS



Students with Jacob's Ladder sing If You're Happy and You Know It

The Vicksburg District held its annual Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Kickoff on Tuesday, October 2, 2007. The CFC provides a channel through which the workforce can give towards helping others within the local community, the state, and even on a national level. The District's goal was set at \$70,000, and its campaign ran October 9th through November 19th.

The theme was "Creating Happy Lives," and was the focus of this year's skit, written and directed by Tony Lobred, CFC Team Member. The major actors were the senior staff lead by Col. Michael C. Wehr and LTC William L. Burruss. Special music was performed by "Perfect Harmony", the Vicksburg Contracting Community Choir, under the direction of Darralyn Williams, Acting Chief, Vicksburg Contracting Office. Their musical selection entitled "Let There Be Peace on Earth" is a beautiful patriotic song

about world peace, love, and understanding for all mankind.

In addition to the special entertainment, guest speakers were Charlotta Ferguson with the local United Way and CFC Coordinator; Donna Myers, former District employee, who spoke on behalf of St. Jude; and Scottie Kiihnl with the local women's shelter The Haven House.

The program ended with a special performance of 'If

You're Happy and You Know It,' sang by students of Jacob's Ladder School, under the direction of instructor Sandra Brooks. Col. Wehr presented each student with a special gift bag and a Vicksburg District pin.

The chairpersons for the CFC, Stacy Thurman and Carol Ann Murphy of Contracting Division stated, "We thank everyone for their support and hard work. Our aim was not only to reach our goal but to create a greater community understanding through volunteering and giving."



Staff members dressed in costume (as on a tropical island) for the skit.

WILSON NAMED MASTER OF CORPS' MV WILLIAM JAMES

Ray Wilson has been named master of the District's Motor Vessel WILLIAM JAMES. The motor vessel is the newest addition to the Corps' river fleet working along the Mississippi River.

Wilson will oversee a 20-man crew as part of the District's operations division's mat sinking unit, working closely with revetment operations. During off season the motor vessel and crew assist with the

Corps' community relations programs.

He began his career with the Vicksburg District in March 2005 as assistant master of the Motor Vessel FRED LEE out of the Monroe Navigation Project Office. The majority of work performed involved repair and maintenance of lock and dam structures on the Red River and Ouachita-Black Waterway.

Wilson, a Vicksburg native, attended Warren Central High School and Hinds Junior College. He has one son and is married to the former Laura Johnston of Vicksburg. His parents are Emma Lee Wilson, who resides in Vicksburg, and Billy Ray Wilson of Ellisville.



Ray Wilson

STOCKTON NAMED MASTER FOR DREDGE JADWIN

Randy Stockton has recently been named master of the Dredge JADWIN of the Vicksburg District.

In his new assignment, Stockton will be in charge of a crew of approximately 48 personnel that will perform dredge operations on the lower Mississippi River. The crew is responsible for maintaining

river channels for towing vessels and the New Orleans District's ship channels.

The dredge is a dustpan dredge and was built in 1933. Unique to the Mississippi River, it vacuums sand and silt accumulated on the river floor and deposits it outside the navigation channel.

A native of Leland, Stockton began his career as a deckhand on the Dredge JADWIN with the Vicksburg District in 1980, and later served as a first mate.

He is the son of W. R. Stockton, Jr. of Hollandale, MS.



Randy Stockton

DULANEY SELECTED AS CHIEF, DESIGN BRANCH

Henry A. Dulaney was recently named chief the engineering and construction division's design branch.

Dulaney will be responsible for the overall management of the engineering design activities of the District's civil works program.

He began working at the District office in July 1986. Previous assignments included serving as team leader of the technical services section where he was responsible for management of the AE program, production of design reports and engineering appendices, and the reloca-

tion of all public facilities associated with project construction.

A native of Vicksburg, he is a graduate of Vicksburg High School, and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering, and his master's degree in engineering management from Mississippi State University.

He is a registered professional engineer in the State of Mississippi, vice-president of the Vicksburg Post of the Society of American Military Engineers, and a member of the board of directors of the Warren County MSU Alumni Association. He is also a deacon at Calvary M.B. Church, and a YMCA volunteer coach.

Dulaney is the son of Mrs. Jessie D. Green of Vicksburg, and is married to the former Melissa Jordan of Jackson. They are the parents of five children.



Henry A. Dulaney

Rising tide at lock and dam causes “beaver curiosity”

BY JOSEPH HALLER
COLUMBIA LOCK AND DAM

An employee with the District’s Columbia Lock and Dam found a beaver that appeared to be making an inspection of the lock and dam on October 24, 2007.

The beaver apparently made an initial quick perimeter inspection of the outside dam but became somewhat confused as well as inquisitive about the lock chamber.

Upon further inspection Mr. Beaver noticed gates opening and decided to take a closer look. Immediately after entering, the gates closed and the water began to rise. Being the intelligent creature that he is and the inventor of the original dam, the beaver decided to use the time he had to investigate this engineering adaptation to a dam structure.

He marveled at the high walled, closed in structure and the rise and fall of the water for upstream—downstream navigation. From a personal point of view he found the controllable water depth especially appealing. This chamber could be used to catch and store driftwood, and if not for anything else, it could serve as a transporting system for overpopulation of close kin folks, i.e. entice the in-laws and undisciplined offspring into the upstream side while they sleep in the downstream current.

Although Mr. Beaver was enjoying his visit, once the lock gates opened he immediately plunged into the water and abruptly swam away. Please understand, he has a family to feed, an image to protect and a new idea in his head.

Look closely and you can see Mr. Beaver as he waits patiently for the gates to unlock.



“Handicap Hunt” Held at Columbia Lock & Dam

BY JOE HALLER, PARK RANGER, USACE

On November 3rd and 4th, 2007, eight wheelchair bound hunters enjoyed fun, fellowship, good food and big stories during the third annual “Handicap Hunt” on Corps of Engineers property adjacent to the Columbia L&D. Other sponsors include Outdoors Without Limits and the Caldwell Parish Sheriff Department.

The 2007 event marks the third year that the Corps of Engineers has sponsored the event. While called a hunt, the event actually brings people together from all walks of life. Take Destiny Sanchez, an eight year old hunter from Ruby, LA. Destiny not only bagged two deer but went away with positive memories in her heart, as did her Mama and Daddy.

A young man, Bryant Howard who is a wounded Iraq Veteran from Jonesville, hunted both days with his brother by his side. Randy “SpinnerBait” Devins from Logansport made his first shot Saturday morning, downing a large doe. Seven of the hunters were from Louisiana and one from Arkansas. They harvested six deer: one buck and five doe.

Along with the sponsors there were nine volunteers logging over 240 hours. Everyone worked together



Kenny Green from Shreveport sports a “thought-I-hit-em” ammo necklace awarded to him at lunchtime Saturday by Greg Brown of Outdoors Without Limits. Kenny downed a deer in the afternoon hunt.



Randy “Spinner bait” Devins from Logansport discusses (brags) his strategy in downing the first deer Saturday.

to make this event a positive experience for so called “handicapped hunters”. These people truly teach us all to count our blessings and enjoy life. They show us everyday in their actions and attitude that they truly are people without limits.

District Field Offices & Services

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District

4155 E. Clay Street

Vicksburg, MS 39183

www.mvk.usace.army.mil

email: cemvk-pa@army.us.mil.

Lake Ouachita (501) 767-2101

Lake Greason (870) 285-2151

DeGray Lake (870) 246-5501

Sardis Lake (662) 563-4531

Arkabutla Lake (662) 562-6261

Enid Lake (662) 563-4571

Grenada Lake (662) 226-5911

Bayou Bodcau (318) 322-6391

JBW Waterway (318) 322-6391

Ouachita-Black Rivers (318) 322-6391

Golden Age Passports (601) 631-5287

Aerial Photography (601) 631-5709

Corps Wetland Permits (601) 631-5289

Apply, ask questions, or report violations

Contracting & Bids (601) 631-7706

Vendors, status of bids, specs

Community Support (601) 631-5223

Tours, speakers, volunteers

Historical Questions & Research (601) 634-7023

Mississippi River History Center

Real Estate Issues (601) 631-5220

Corps impacts to your property

Employment Questions (601) 631-5859

Vacancies, status, qualifications

Historical Photographs (601) 631-5020

Environmental (601) 631-5410

Other Vicksburg Engineer/ Federal Organizations:

Mississippi Valley Division

(601) 634-5760

Engineer Research & Development
Center

(601) 634-2504

412th Engineer Command

(601) 636-1686

168th Engineer Group

(601) 313-5290

Vicksburg National Military Park

(601) 636-0583

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